

MEMO

DATE: September 20, 2007

TO: Executive Committee

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SUBJECT: Policy Committee Chair Staff Support

BACKGROUND:

The issues that face our Policy Committees are numerous and increasingly complex. The Executive Committee has requested SCAG staff to propose a plan for supporting the Chairs of the Administration; Community, Economic & Human Development; Energy & Environment; and Transportation & Communications committees.

The primary support for the committees has come from the lead committee staff: the CFO, the Planning & Policy Managers and the administrative support staff assigned to the four committees. They coordinate with the Chairs; discuss technical issues that are pertinent to the committee; do future planning; and address any other related items that might arise. The Administrative Assistants prepare the agenda packets, meeting minutes and other correspondence to the committee members. The Directors and the Executive Director are available to the Chairs and would provide back-up to the Managers when necessary.

ADDITIONAL STAFF SUPPORT ALTERNATIVES

Alternative #1

- The Member Relations Officer in the subregion of each Chair could provide them support on a day-to-day basis. They could act as liaison between them, SCAG staff and regional partners as appropriate. Tasks could include information gathering, communications, and any other necessary tasks. They could take the lead on special meeting logistics including facilities location, meeting reminders/announcements, possible teleconferencing and videoconferencing set-ups, audiovisual needs, food & beverage, and any other items needed. They would work closely with the lead committee staff. The Manager of Member Relations would back-up the Officers.

Advantages: This option would provide four people to directly support the Chairs assuming each Chair is from a different sub region. Continuity of support would occur. The positions are already budgeted.

Disadvantages: This option would add to that staffs workload.

Alternative #2

- Add a Senior Administrative Assistant position that would be dedicated to the Chairs on a part-time or full-time basis. This position would be responsible for acting as a liaison between the Chairs and SCAG staff and regional partners. The position would provide the same basic functions of Alternative 1.

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Advantages: There would be a dedicated person to work with the Chairs on their particular needs and provide continuity from year to year.

Disadvantages: The cost of a new staff person.

Alternative #3

- The Chairs would hire a consultant who would be dedicated to the Chairs on a part-time or full-time basis. The position would carry out the same basic assignments.

Advantages: This would be a dedicated position. If the Chairs were not satisfied with performance, it would be easier to change contractors.

Disadvantages: The cost of the consultant contract. Going out to bid on a new contract each year might cause a loss of continuity; however, this could be overcome with a multiyear contract.

In addition to whichever option you decide, the primary staff to each committee will:

1. Set a regular meeting time with the Chair. Also set the amount and type of additional communication the Chair wants.
2. Be empowered to represent the Chair's viewpoint on agenda content and length of meeting needed.
3. Send weekly e-mail updates to the Chairs on policy issues under the purview of the committee.
4. Hold a standing meeting with the President's dedicated staff member for SCAG to coordinate information.
5. Assist the Chairs in a yearly planning session to set priorities for the year.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There would be no direct fiscal impact under Alternative #1.

There would be a financial impact of a part-time or full-time Senior Administrative Assistant or consultant under Alternatives #2 and 3.

Reviewed by:

Division Manager

Reviewed by:

Department Director

Reviewed by:

Chief Financial Officer